The issue of Jammu and Kashmir is being discussed between India and Pakistan within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. Our consistent position in these talks has been that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. There can be no redrawing of borders and the settlement of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir can be achieved through dialogue. Any re-deployment of security forces within the country is a sovereign decision of the Government of India based on its own assessment of the prevailing security situation. Jammu and Kashmir already enjoys autonomy under the Indian Constitution and has in place a democratically elected Government.

India is committed to resolving all outstanding issues with Pakistan bilaterally and peacefully in accordance with the Simla Agreement. The Government intend to continue with the present process of confidence building, cooperation and dialogue in an atmosphere free from terror and violence.

**Indians in foreign jails**

*71. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian citizens and service personnel who are in the jails of our neighbouring countries;

(b) whether it is a fact that a lot of innocent people including fishermen, are jailed in those countries; and

(c) whether Government have initiated any steps to get them released?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A Statement of Indian prisoners in jails in neighbouring countries is enclosed. (*See* below)

As mentioned in the enclosed statement, out of a total of 2012 Indian prisoners in jails in neighbouring countries, 396 and 13 fishermen are in prisons in Pakistan and Sri Lanka respectively.

The Government of India, through its Missions and Posts abroad and through bilateral meetings with officials of the concerned countries, make all possible efforts to get Indian nationals in foreign jails released quickly and to provide necessary assistance which includes requesting speedy trials, seeking remission of sentence, seeking consular access to the detainees and prisoners, providing advice/guidance in legal and other matters, interacting with their families in India, ensuring fair and humane treatment in foreign jails and facilitating repatriation to India on their release.

***Statement***

*Prisoners in Jails of Neighbouring Countries*

| Sl. No. | Name of the country | No. of prisoners |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Bangladesh | 854 |
| 2. | Bhutan | 30 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|
| 3. | China | 52 |
| 4. | Maldives | 13 |
| 5. | Myanmar | 37 |
| 6. | Nepal | 339 |
| 7. | Pakistan | 629-<br>159 civilian<br>396 fishermen<br>74 service personnel |
| 8. | Sri Lanka | 58 (including 13 fishermen in judicial custody) |
| | TOTAL: | 2012 |

**Construction of road in non-demarcated Indian territory**

†*72. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a road is being constructed by China in non-demarcated Indian territory;

(b) whether the construction of a metalled road up to the Everest Base Camp at a cost of dollar 2 crore is a matter of concern from the security point of view;

(c) whether Minister of Cultural Affairs of China, Mr. Sun Jia Jang who visited India recently had confirmed that construction work on the 108 km. long highway would continue;

(d) whether this construction would destroy the age old ecology of Himalayas; and

(e) whether Government have raised the issue of road construction with the Government of China?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) Government have seen media reports stating that China plans to construct a highway on Mount Everest, which is located on the border between Nepal and the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China. According to these reports, construction is likely to be completed in four months and at an estimated cost of US$ 19.7 million. Chinese Culture Minister Sun Jiazheng is reported to have confirmed this to the media during a visit to New Delhi on 20 June, 2007. According

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi